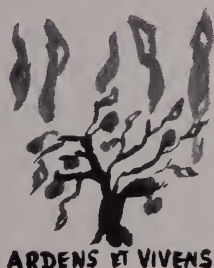


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KARL BARTH'S
THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY:
An Analogical Critique Regarding Gender Relations



KARL BARTH'S
THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY:
An Analogical Critique
Regarding Gender Relations

ELIZABETH FRYKBERG



PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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Editor's Foreword

In this study, Elizabeth Frykberg addresses two recurring points of controversy surrounding the teachings of Karl Barth: In what ways do his uses of analogies change over the course of his writings, and what is the relation between equality and ordering in his treatment of the relations between women and men? These two controversial points are inevitably intertwined, and how one interprets Barth's teaching of men-women relations depends to a large degree on how one interprets Barth's use of the *analogia relationis*. Although it may be inevitable in the present highly charged ideological atmosphere shared by combatants on all sides of these issues, it does seem that Barth has come to function for many persons more as a useful stereotype than as a theologian and ethicist whose complex and nuanced thought defies ready categorization.

Dr. Frykberg argues, in this essay, that a different model of analogical thinking will further an understanding of Barth's own thought. It will help make the necessary critiques of Barth more accurate, it will help reformulate his central argument, and it will help translate crucial insights of Reformed theology for one of the most urgent ethical issues before our cultures today. Dr. Frykberg brings to bear an interdisciplinary approach to some of the more arduous methodical decisions that Barth and others must make in dealing with gender relations today. She knows the risks of such interdisciplinary approaches but makes the case that often when impasses are reached in some discussions, the issues bear looking at from unexpected angles. The angle she especially favors here is that of the alternative analogical model developed by James Loder and the late W. J. Neidhardt. She also gives us an interesting treatment of Barth's own view of interdisciplinary methods.

Dr. Frykberg has taught at various schools, including Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Villanova University, and Princeton Theological Seminary, and she has served on the staffs of several congregations.

David Willis-Watkins



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I

Introduction

In the twilight years of the twentieth century, the relations between the genders, including issues of sexuality, remain topics of major concern and debate in both the theological and human sciences. Insights from the human sciences continue to challenge traditional Christian understandings. In response to these challenges, the church has been debating the questions of abortion and birth control, reconsidering the issue of homosexuality, and adjusting its thinking regarding sexual dysfunction and abuse and harassment. The church has been reassessing its views on divorce, singleness, premarital and extramarital sex. In the process, as the church's conventional moral teachings are abandoned in favor of new seemingly more enlightened views, a great deal of fear, anger, and confusion has been generated. In light of this situation, there is a crying need for responsible dialogue with the human sciences from evangelical and reformed perspectives. It is toward the end of preparing the way for Karl Barth's theological contribution to such a dialogue that this essay is directed.

Karl Barth has been chosen as the primary theological contributor because for him sexuality is a basic concern of theological anthropology. According to Emma J. Justes:

To an extent paralleled by no other modern theologian, Barth grapples with the question of the relationship between man and woman as understood by Christian faith. Other theologians have dealt with this question mainly as a question of the marriage relationship. Barth looks beyond that particular form of the man-woman relationship to a more general consideration of their relationship outside of marriage as well.¹

¹ Emma J. Justes, "Theological Reflections on the Role of Women in Church and Society" *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 32 (1978): 43.

Barth's understanding seems to have great constructive potential. Much depends on accurately specifying Barth's understanding. To put the matter concisely, there are three propositions that constitute the framework of Barth's understanding of sexuality.

The first proposition is that as created by God in God's own image, the human is either male or female. God commands humans to be genuinely and fully either the human male or the human female. Humans are to acknowledge and accept their gender identity, not deny or transcend it. They are to rejoice in their existence as male or female beings, not be ashamed. They are to use its potentialities fruitfully, not neglect or abuse them.²

The second proposition is that the human, who is either male or female, is also created by God in and for relationship with the opposite sex. There is no isolated or self-sufficient male or female existence. The male is not human without the female; the female is not human without the male. To be created in the image of God is to be created male *and* female.³

The third proposition is that the human in the image of God, male and female, is created in and for ordered relational existence.

All the misuse and misunderstanding to which the conception of order is liable must not prevent us from considering and asserting the aspect of reality to which it points. A precedes B, and B follows A. Order means succession. It means preceding and following. It means super- and subordination.⁴

The human male is superordinate to the human female. The human female is subordinate to the human male.

In recent years, theological discussion of Barth's understanding of sexuality has focused on the third proposition: the problem of his having insisted on there being this necessary superordinate-subordinate ordering of the human male-female relation. Paul Jewett, Letty Russell, Cynthia Campbell, and Alexander McKelway—to name just four—have all wrestled with the perceived difficulty. Letty Russell believes that Barth errs in making the original connection between the *Imago Dei* and the male-female relation.⁵ Paul Jewett contends that Barth's exegesis of the biblical material is flawed.⁶ Cynthia Camp-

² Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* 4 vols., eds. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936–1969), III/4, p. 149. Although all references from the CD will be to this English translation, the passages will at times be retranslated by this author to reflect current English usage, particularly with regard to gender inclusive language.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁵ Letty Russell, *The Future of Partnership* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979).

⁶ Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975).

bell concludes that the problem lies in Barth's theological method and at the very heart of his understanding of the Trinity.⁷ Alexander J. McKelway interprets Barth "according to his best parts"⁸ and tends to minimize some of the more serious methodological difficulties in Barth's understanding. These theologians evaluate Barth's teaching in relation to their own theological systems. This essay, on the other hand, will analyze, critique, and rework his understanding in light of the feminist critique of patriarchal structures, but it will do so in accord with Barth's own radical Christocentric approach to content and method.

Before explicating further the content of Barth's understanding of human sexuality, as it is developed in his discussion of human creation in the image of God, male and female, attention will first be given to Barth's method in theological anthropology. We intend, thereby, to establish a sound methodological basis for placing his thought in interdisciplinary dialogue with the human sciences.

⁷ Cynthia Campbell, *Imago Trinitatis: An Appraisal of Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Imago Dei in Light of His Doctrine of the Trinity* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1981), p. vii.

⁸ Alexander J. McKelway, "Perichoretic Possibilities in Barth's Doctrine of Male and Female" *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* VII 3 New Series (1986): 231-243.

II

Barth's Method and Interdisciplinary Dialogue

BARTH'S UNDERSTANDING OF THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

According to Barth, since the Word of God reveals how and why the human being is related to God, Scripture describes the history of the divine-human relationship, coming to focal expression in the history of Jesus Christ. "Who and what the human is, is no less specifically and emphatically declared by the Word of God than who and what God is."⁹ This is why dogmatics has a duty to expound a specific doctrine of humanity. The task of theological anthropology is very specific. It is to inquire into the human creatureliness presupposed in and made known by this revealed divine-human relationship.

As such, theological anthropology asks the question, "What kind of a being is it which stands in this relationship with God?" Barth, true to the major assumptions of the theological method of his *Church Dogmatics*,¹⁰ seeks to understand and answer the question, not by reflecting and meditating upon the observable phenomena of the human, but by reflecting and meditating upon the divine-human relationship as seen and understood in the Word of

⁹ Barth, *CD* III/2, p. 13.

¹⁰ "The *Church Dogmatics* represents the culmination of the methodological revision which engaged Barth's attention after the publication of the first volume of the *Christian Dogmatics*. That revision entailed . . . a definition of theology as a science attached to the church, an accentuating of Christology, and a focusing of attention away from the self existing in faith and towards the positive content of faith given in revelation, i.e., the faith of the church. What this amounts to is a sustained effort to ground theology in an independent method, that is, in a way of carrying on its task of reflection, criticism, and construction without borrowing presuppositions or criteria from other disciplines. This will mean that theology begins, traverses, and culminates solely on the ground of, and exclusively in reference to its origin in revelation. In this respect, theology will function as a reflection of the aseity of God." Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), p. 66.

God. Thus, the Word of God in its threefold form (proclaimed, written, and revealed) is the Church's primary resource for developing its understanding of theological anthropology.

What is seen in light of the Word of God, in light of God's gracious activity on behalf of humankind, is humans in rebellion, in contradiction with themselves, sinners unable to stand before God. This creates a methodological problem for theological anthropology.

And the difficulty which confronts us is this. In these circumstances how can we possibly reach a doctrine of the human in the sense of a doctrine of its creaturely essence, of its nature as such? For what we recognize to be human nature is nothing other than the disgrace which covers human nature; human inhumanity, perversion and corruption. If we try to deny this or to tone it down, we have not yet understood the full import of the truth that for the reconciliation of the human with God nothing more nor less was needed than the death of the Son of God, and for the manifestation of this reconciliation nothing more nor less than the resurrection of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. But if we know the human only in the corruption and distortion of its being, how can we even begin to answer the question about its creaturely nature?¹¹

Barth resolves this methodological problem by further reflection upon the Word of God, finding in the content of revelation two clues to resolution. First, he discovers that humans are the object of divine grace. He infers from this that

If the human is the object of divine grace, self-contradiction may be radical and total, but it is not the last word that has been spoken . . . it cannot even be the first word . . .¹²

Human beings in sin do not cease to exist as the ones God has created. God does not allow sin to constitute a new creature. Humans still belong to God, not through any action of their own but by the grace of God. The Word of God teaches that while human beings have chosen to betray themselves, God has not therefore forsaken them. God's original intention for humanity to be in relationship with the divine is by God's gracious action still valid. The implication of this is that even though tainted by sin, something of the real essence of humanity remains in humankind's relationship with the divine.

¹¹ Barth, *CD* III/2, p. 27.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

For it is not the case that because the creaturely being of the human may be known by us only in its sinful determination, it is not real and knowable in any other way, as though human nature had been changed into its opposite, and by sinning the human had in some sense suffered a mutation into a different kind of creature. For sin itself can arise and take shape only as sin against the grace of God, and it can be known only with the knowledge of grace. And "the grace of God alone remains eternally"—it alone, and therefore not the sin in which the human opposes oneself to it.¹³

God's graciousness on behalf of humankind ensures that sin and the corruption of human nature do not triumph.

Still, grace does not in and of itself resolve the methodic dilemma of theological anthropology created by human sin. It does not resolve the dilemma, because fallen humanity corrupted by sin has no criteria by means of which to see through the perversion of sin to humanity's true nature. Consequently, Barth rejects as methodologically flawed any and all anthropologies that begin with the premise that the human being can be both teacher and pupil of any true understanding of human nature.

But what humankind cannot do, God can. God knows the truth about humanity. This truth can be known by humankind (at least indirectly) as it reflects upon God's attitude toward humanity as disclosed in the revealed Word of God.

The Word of God instructs us concerning it [the essence of the human] to the extent that God's attitude to the human as revealed and knowable in it [the Word of God] always refers to and counts on this creaturely essence of the human . . .¹⁴

This leads Barth to the heart of the matter, which is that because "the human Jesus is himself the revealing Word of God, he is the source of our knowledge of the nature of the human as created by God."¹⁵ For Barth, the question that formulates and frames the task of theological anthropology is, "What is the creaturely nature of the human to the extent that, looking to the revealed grace of God and concretely to the human Jesus, we can see in it a continuum unbroken by sin, an essence which even sin does not and cannot change?"¹⁶

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

JESUS CHRIST AS SOURCE OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HUMANITY

Frequently, theological anthropologies attempt first to establish in general what human nature is and then interpret, from this general understanding, the human nature of Jesus Christ in particular. Barth again rejects this method. For him, human sin makes the first step impossible. Without a new disclosure of the essence of the human being, no true understanding of the "reality" of the human can be achieved. Barth resolves this logical dilemma in total consistency with his overall theological method and its christological formulation by asserting that Jesus Christ is the necessary, new revelation.¹⁷ Barth's theological anthropology is grounded in Christology; his generalizations are made from a christological foundation.

Barth readily sees that this method is itself not without its problems. To begin with, there can be no simple reduction of anthropology to Christology, because there is no straightforward equation of human nature as seen and experienced by humankind and the human nature of Jesus Christ.

Human nature as it is in ourselves is always a debatable quantity; the human situation as we know and experience it is dialectical. We exist in antitheses which we cannot escape or see beyond. We bear various aspects none of which can be disowned. Our life has no unity. We seek it, as the various theories of the human bear witness. But we only seek it. . . . But the first thing which has to be said about human nature in Jesus is that in him an effective protest is lodged against our self-contradiction and all the self-deception in which we try to conceal it. It is a protest because the antitheses in which we live are no antitheses in him, and therefore do not require any attempted solution, so that in him all illusions about the success of these attempts are quite irrelevant. . . . It is clear from these considerations that when we look in these different directions, at Jesus on the one hand and ourselves and the human in general on the other, we at once find ourselves in very different spheres.¹⁸

But that they are different is not the final word, because in Jesus Christ we see not only our sin, but his sinlessness.

¹⁷ "The two major methodological assumptions in the *Church Dogmatics* are (1) the employment of the 'principle' of presupposition, whereby every major section of dogmatics is grounded securely in Christology; and (2) the use of analogy as a means of grounding the ontic givenness and continuity of the creature (*analogia relationis*) and his proper knowledge of God (*analogia fidei*)." Robert E. Willis, "Some Difficulties in Barth's Development of Special Ethics" *Religious Studies* 6 (1970): 149.

¹⁸ Barth, *CD* III/2, pp. 47-48.

In him is human nature without human sin. . . . For although he becomes what we are, he does not do what we do, and so he is not what we are. He is the human like ourselves, yet he is not a sinner, but the human who honors his creation and covenant of grace.¹⁹

God finds pleasure in the sinless human being, Jesus Christ, giving him power to forgive sin. Jesus makes up for our lack. In him and for his sake, God finds human nature blameless.

This is the basis of our pardon and of the continuance of the covenant which we have broken. God does not have regard to the fact that we have broken it, but to the fact that Jesus keeps it.²⁰

On the basis of Jesus Christ's redeeming work on our behalf, "we may count on this nature of ours and its innocence as we could not otherwise do. *This judicial pardon* gives us courage and shows us the way to think about the human as God created it. It is *the true ground of theological anthropology*."²¹ Moreover, on the basis of our justification by God through Christ, we may contemplate our nature, as God originally created it.

Having said this, however, it must still be affirmed that fundamental differences between Jesus Christ and us remain. The first difference is that Jesus Christ, as a human being, is still God. "Human nature in him is determined by a relation between God and himself such as has never existed between God and us, and never will exist. He alone is the Son of Man and the Son of God."²² Second, as already noted, Jesus Christ is sinless. "That human nature is one thing in him and another in us means . . . that in him it is not distorted by sin and therefore concealed in its reality, but maintained and preserved in its original essence."²³ The third way that "Jesus is the same as us, but very differently in virtue of his unique relationship to God, is simply that in him human nature is not concealed but revealed in its original and basic form."²⁴

Thus even though we may see and contemplate our human nature by viewing Jesus Christ because of our justification, the above fundamental differences between Jesus Christ and human nature again force the original conclusion. There is no simple equation between Christology and anthropology. What we have instead is similarity in difference, the correspondence of the unlike.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 48.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 48–49; italic mine.

²² Ibid., p. 49.

²³ Ibid., p. 51.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 52.

That Jesus is utterly unlike us as God and utterly like us as a human is the twofold fact which constitutes the whole secret of his person.²⁵

In other words, what we have is an analogy: Jesus Christ the Analogue, human beings the analogatum.

BARTH'S USE OF ANALOGY

For Barth, analogy means correspondence and similarity between two things that are otherwise different.

In theology we can and should speak about similarity and therefore analogy when we find likeness and unlikeness between two quantities: a certain likeness which is compromised by a great unlikeness; or a certain unlikeness which is always relativized and qualified by a certain existent likeness.²⁶

The epistemological and ontological dimensions of Barth's analogical thinking about the similarities and dissimilarities between Jesus Christ and humanity are based on an *analogia fidei* and an *analogia relationis*, respectively.²⁷ This position is developed over against the *analogia entis* most frequently associated with a particular kind of natural theology and with a major stream of Roman Catholicism.²⁸

²⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

²⁶ Idem, CD III/3, p. 102.

²⁷ A number of scholars point out the philosophical distinction between the *analogia relationis* and the *analogia fidei*. See Jung Young Lee, "Karl Barth's Use of Analogy in his *Church Dogmatics*" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 2 (1969): 129, 137–138, 140–151; Hans Frei, in *Faith and Ethics*, ed. Paul Ramsey (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 52; and Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth*, p. 71.

²⁸ Much of the literature on Barth's use of analogy is concerned with the question of the appropriateness of Barth's rejection of *analogia entis* and his characterization of the traditional Catholic position. Discussion of this important issue is beyond the scope of this investigation. The significant literature discussing the issue includes: Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. John Drury (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972); Horst Georg Pohlmann, *Analogia entis oder Analogia fidei?* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965); Walter Kreck, "Analogia fidei oder analogia entis" and Gottlieb Sohngen, "Analogia entis in analogia fidei" in *Antwort*, eds. Ernst Wolf, Charlotte von Kirschbaum, and Rudolf Frey (Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag AG., 1956); Karl Hammer, "Analogia relationis gegen Analogia entis," in *Parrhesia*, eds. Eberhard Busch, Jürgen Fangmeier, and Max Geiger (Zurich: EVZ-Verlag, 1966); John McIntyre, "Analogy" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 12 1 (1959): 1–20; Harold G. Wells, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of Analogy" *Canadian Journal of Theology* 15 (1969): 203–213; Jung Young Lee, "Karl Barth's Use of Analogy in his *Church Dogmatics*" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 2 (1969): 129–151.

Analogia Fidei and Transformational Logic

The epistemological analogy, *analogia fidei* is required, because Barth recognizes that knowledge of divine revelation infers human reception.

For if we know God, we know God by means given to us, otherwise we do not know God at all. The fact that we know God must mean that, with our views, concepts and words, we do not describe and express something quite different from Godself, but that in and by these means of ours—the only ones we have—we describe and express God Godself.²⁹

The means that allow reception are for Barth not created or inherited by the human, but are instead created and given by the grace of God to humanity.³⁰ There is no simple parity (univocacy) or simple disparity (equivocacy) between “these means” used to describe and express God and the reality of God in Godself.³¹ Consequently, what we have is an analogy. This analogy is given in faith for faith. This is why Barth calls it the *analogia fidei*.

Barth defines the *analogia fidei* as “the correspondence [in faith] of the thing known with the knowing, of the object with the thought, of the Word of God with the word of the human in thought and in speech.”³² Human knowledge about God comes from the encounter that takes place in God’s Self-revelation in Jesus Christ. It is to Christ that faith, “an act of human decision corresponding to the act of divine decision,”³³ is directed. Through this analogy, revealed and made possible by Christ, God affected and is affecting the encroachment to communicate with humanity. “In God’s revelation God lowers Godself to be known by us according to the measure of our own cognition.”³⁴ This divine encroachment comes into the world as “the good pleasure of the divine grace and mercy.”³⁵ It comes to us in Jesus Christ. Christ is “the knowability of God on our side, as he is the grace of God itself, and therefore also the knowability of God on God’s side.”³⁶

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Christ sanctifies human language and transforms it into language about God.³⁷ He does this by taking human language to himself (the form) and filling it with God’s own Word (the content). Still the knowledge of God communicated through this human form of lan-

²⁹ Barth, *CD* II/1, p. 225.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

³² *Idem*, *CD* I/1, pp. 243–244.

³³ *Idem*, *CD* II/1, p. 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

³⁷ *Idem*, *CD* I/1, p. 49.

guage, remains always analogous knowledge because human language, even when God has taken it to Godself, remains human language. Further, the Word of God communicated through human means remains always the Word of God. It cannot be bound by the human. Consequently, humanity knows God only by analogy. God alone knows and understands Godself fully and completely as God really is, which means we can know God only through Christ, the Master Analogue.

Jung Young Lee summarizes the epistemology of the *analogia fidei* with the following words:

The epistemology of *analogia fidei* is due to a "contradiction between form and content." The form of analogy, which is the mode of signification, is human, the content of it is God Godself. The content (the revelation of God in Christ) takes to Godself the form (human language) to be known by the human. But the human form is inadequate to express the divine content. Therefore, it is a partial correspondence, the correspondence from God's side only. To know God on the basis of this partial correspondence is precisely what Barth implies in the epistemology of *analogia fidei*.³⁸

Thus, all human knowing of the divine is knowing mediated by the Word of God in one of the three forms: proclaimed, written, or revealed.

In a later portion of this essay, analysis of the epistemological premises embedded in Barth's description of the Act of Faith will reveal that his understanding of subjective appropriation of this Word is congruent with the logic of transformation as described by James E. Loder. This is an important finding in that it establishes a sound epistemological basis for placing Barth's theological anthropology in interdisciplinary dialogue with the human sciences. Consequently, the logic of transformational knowing will now be spelled out in some detail.

According to Loder, there is a transformational logic that transposes from context to context, generating a multiplicity of personal, social, and cultural expressions.³⁹ In detail, he traces the logic's transposition to scientific,⁴⁰ aesthetic,⁴¹ therapeutic,⁴² and convictional knowing as well as to the stage transition process of human development.⁴³ The logic consists, he says, of an

³⁸ Lee, "Karl Barth's Use of Analogy . . .," p. 141.

³⁹ James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment* 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Helmers and Howard, 1990), pp. 43-44.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 44-49.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 49-57.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 57-63.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 93-122.

initial situation and five steps: conflict, scanning, insight, tension release, interpretation.

As regards the *initial state*, knowing events take place in the social and cultural “world” of the knower and depend initially on assumptions about and within situations for the meaning of the knowing act.⁴⁴ This “lived world” (or *first dimension*) underlies and sustains what we normally call “reality.” It is the universe of meaning that is both given to us and constructed by us—the shared composition of everyday experience. Since the lived world is composed and recomposed, it follows logically that there is also a knower or a composer in and through whom the recomposition occurs. This “self” (or *second dimension*) is described by Loder as self-reflective, self-related, and self-choosing, but supremely self only as spirit transparently grounded in its Source.⁴⁵ The void (or *third dimension*) is the possibility of annihilation, the potential and eventually inevitable absence of being implicit in existence from birth and explicit in death.⁴⁶ In the process of transformational knowing, the void intrudes into two-dimensional existence, rupturing the self’s composition of the lived world.

So far we have been describing what Loder calls the initial situation. Now to the five steps of transformational logic.

The first step is “conflict borne with persistence.” For any problem, dilemma, crisis, or puzzle to initiate a knowing event, two conditions need to be met. First, the conflict must rupture the knower’s assumptive world. That means that it must be understandable and recognizable within the given context and, yet, unresolvable. Second, the conflict must be one that is “cared about.” If the conflict and resultant contextual rupture are not sufficiently cared about, then the knower will not be motivated to expend the energy required to bring the sequence to completion.⁴⁷ Both of these conditions motivate the knower to bear the conflict with persistence: the first, because there is a human tendency once any context is ruptured to want to set it right or know that it is all right that it not be settled; the second, because the personal significance of the conflict drives a knower to invest energy in seeking its resolution.⁴⁸

The second step is the “interlude for scanning.” It is “the step of waiting, wondering, following hunches, and exhausting the possibilities.”⁴⁹ Here, the

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 75–80.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 80–85.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

knower deals with the comprehensive implications of the conflict and looks for a solution of the most universal kind. All available resources and conscious cognitive competencies are employed in an effort to solve or resolve a defined or redefined dilemma, problem, conflict, complication, or puzzle. In the process, new but unsatisfactory approaches to resolution emerge. Then in an off-conscious moment that can last a few seconds or a few years, unconscious and preconscious psychological processes free from the constraints and restrictions of conscious thought scan, sort, and integrate elements of the conflict with available psychic resources. The mind mobilizes and superimposes dissimilar ingredients into new perceptual and conceptual patterns, "reshuffling experiences to achieve those fantastic degrees of condensation without which creativity in any field of activity would be impossible."⁵⁰

The third step is "insight felt with intuitive force." Insight is the constructive act of the imagination, which conveys in a form available to consciousness the essence of the resolution. It imaginatively "bisociates" two or more hitherto unrelated frames of reference into a meaningful unity.⁵¹ This is the turning point of the knowing event, which integrates the disarray or confusing elements of the conflict so as to resolve the conflict, not by repression, elimination, or habitual response, but by giving to the knower a new set of eyes, a new point of view. Insights break through to consciousness by way of the preconscious or hypnogogic state of mind most familiar to us as the transition stage between being fully awake and completely asleep. It is common, therefore, to experience a flash of insight at times when the mind is off guard, relaxed, distracted from the problem at hand, as when a person may be lying in bed, bathing, gazing at a fire, or walking in the woods. Once conscious, the insight may resolve the conflict in and of itself or be one in a series of insights that together bring resolution. It may be decidedly unusual or something simple and obvious. In either case, however, a truly new perspective emerges that the knower had not previously considered.

The fourth step is the "release and redirection of psychic energy bound up with the original conflict." Once insight is available to consciousness and felt with intuitive and convincing force, there is a lifting of tension, an excitement, a reaction described by many as an "Aha" experience. This fourth step of transformational logic has two elements. First, the energy that was being used to sustain the conflict is freed.

⁵⁰ L.S. Kubie, *Neurotic Distortion of the Creative Process* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1958).

⁵¹ Here Loder uses Arthur Koestler's term "bisociation" as a handy way to summarize the crux of such an imaginative construct. In bisociation, two habitually incompatible frames of reference converge, usually with surprising suddenness, to compose a meaningful unity. Loder, p. 38.

The release of energy is a response of the unconscious to the resolution and the evidence that one's personal investment in the event has reached a conclusion; the conflict is over.⁵²

Second, there is an opening of the knower to both the contextual situation and to him or herself. Here, consciousness is freed *from* the engrossing conflict *for* a measure of self-transcendence.⁵³ It might be said that consciousness is expanded by, and to the measure of, the resolution. Without this energy release, it must be assumed that the dilemma caused by the ruptured context has not been sufficiently resolved by the insight. In this case, the mind returns to continue scanning, searching for a more adequate resolution.

The fifth step is "interpretation of insight." In the fourth step (tension release), the insight is held subjectively in the form of an image, feeling, or vision. A final step is necessary to establish objectively whether the insight felt actually contains a valid, workable, resolution to the original conflict. Here, disciplined effort is again required. The conscious mind works to determine the new insight's value. Thus, the fifth and final step of the logic of transformation is interpretation of the imaginative solution into the behavioral and symbolically constructed world of the original context.

Interpretation moves both backward and forward. Interpretation that is directed backward is "congruence." It "makes explicit, congruent connections from the essential structures of the imaginative construct back into the original conditions"⁵⁴ of the conflict. Interpretation that is directed forward is "correspondence." It makes the apparent congruence public and a matter of consensus.⁵⁵ This is not, however, a matter of conformity for congruence cannot be sacrificed to correspondence. "Both must agree before the event is completed."⁵⁶

Thus, the event originates and concludes in an assumed situation that includes the knower himself via his or her imaginative leap. However, as congruence and correspondence combined, the impact of the event on that world is a transformation of at least some of its elements and an essential gain over the original conditions.⁵⁷

Thus when faced with the void, the self continues to create the lived world and compose new meaning. It does this because humans are actually four-dimensional beings, not three.

⁵² Ibid., p. 39.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 39.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 40.

We continue to live precisely because in the center of the self, for all of its potential perversity, we experience again and again the reversal of those influences that invite despair and drive toward void.⁵⁸

The faces of the void become the faces of the Holy: *the fourth dimension*. "When serenity comes up out of anxiety, joy out of depression, hope out of hopelessness; when good is returned for evil, forgiveness replaces retaliation, and courage triumphs over fear,"⁵⁹ the human spirit makes manifest the face of this fourth Holy dimension.

The Holy is the manifest Presence of being-itself transforming and restoring human being in a way that is approximated by the imaginative image as it recomposes the "world" in the course of transformational knowing. As the Presence of being-itself, the Holy is both within and beyond people, but always it retains its essential character as *mysterium tremendum fascinans*.⁶⁰

Ordinary human transformation begins and ends as a two-dimensional knowing activity of the self. Convictional or spiritual transformation, on the other hand, is a four-dimensional knowing event initiated, mediated, and concluded by Christ. That is, it is a patterned process that begins with Christ's initiative borne in upon the personality by the Spirit, and brought through conflict into faith and worship, as the self is created as spirit by the Presence of the Holy One.

Having now identified transformational logic, we can now turn to see its implications for understanding the act of faith as Barth describes it.

Barth's major thesis concerning subjective reception of God's Self-revelation is summarized as follows:

According to Holy Scripture God's revelation occurs in our enlightenment by the Holy Spirit of God to a knowledge of God's Word. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is God's revelation. In the reality of this event consists our freedom to be the children of God and to know and love and praise God in God's revelation.⁶¹

Thus, it is not only God who chooses to reveal Godself in Jesus Christ, it is, also, God who creates by the power of the Holy Spirit the possibility of human reception of that revelation.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 85.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 89.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

⁶¹ Barth, *CD I/2*, p. 203.

The subjective reality of revelation consists in the fact that we have our being through Christ and in the Church, that we are recipients of the divine testimonies, and, as the real recipients of them, the children of God. But the fact that we have this being is the work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the Holy Spirit is the subjective reality of revelation.⁶²

In other words, for Barth in accord with the Reformers, the Holy Spirit is “Teacher of the Word” and therefore source of all knowledge of God.

Not with regard to the activity of the Spirit, but rather to the effect of that activity in human lives, Barth indicates that subjective apprehension of objective knowledge of God in Jesus Christ is “from our point of view, our own discovery, acknowledgment and affirmation of it”⁶³ and is evidenced by the response of faith. More precisely, he describes the act of faith as acknowledgment (Anerkennung), recognition (Erkennung), and confession (Bekennung) of Jesus Christ.⁶⁴ Faith is an act of human knowing. “If God becomes the object of human knowledge in faith, that must mean that God becomes the object of human perception and comprehension.”⁶⁵ Yet,

The jolt by which the human is wakened and at which s/he awakens . . . is not the work of one of the creaturely factors, co-efficients and agencies which are there at work and can be seen, but of the will and act of God who uses these factors and Godself makes the coefficients and agencies for this purpose, setting them in motion as such in the meaning and direction which God has appointed. We are thus forced to say that this awakening is both wholly creaturely and wholly divine. Yet the initial shock comes from God.⁶⁶

More accurately then, the act of faith is human knowing in response to divine action, a four-dimensional transformational knowing event.

Barth describes “acknowledgment” as the faithful response of the individual to personal encounter with the living Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

If a human comes to Christian faith, this means that in the encounter with the community of Jesus Christ s/he encounters Jesus Christ himself, that in its [the church’s] relative authority and freedom s/he en-

⁶² Ibid., p. 242.

⁶³ Idem, *CD I/2*, pp. 239–240.

⁶⁴ The noetic character of Barth’s understanding of faith is apparent in the three words he chooses as the basis for his discussion of the “Act of Faith” (*CD IV/1*, pp. 757–779). Faith for Barth is a knowledge.

⁶⁵ Idem, *CD II/1*, p. 14.

⁶⁶ Idem, *CD IV/2*, p. 557.

counters his absolute authority and freedom, the law to which the community itself is subject, and therefore a law which is superior to her/him and binds her/him.⁶⁷

This encounter is evidenced in the person by submission to the law of Christ and by an internalized desire to be joined to the Church, the body of Christ.

If s/he [a person] comes to faith, then this means that through its [the church's] ministry and proclamation s/he does not submit to it but to its law and therefore to the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and that in so doing s/he will necessarily desire to associate with it and join it.⁶⁸

Thus, the Holy Spirit, in evoking the act of faith "acknowledgment," disrupts two-dimensional human existence creating the four-dimensional conflict: How do I submit to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Barth also indicates here that the act of faith operates as a latent structure of meaning from the beginning and all at once.

It [acknowledgment] is not preceded by any other kind of knowledge, either recognition or confession. The recognition and confession of faith are included in and follow from the fact that they are originally and properly an acknowledgment, the free act of obedience.⁶⁹

In the act of acknowledgment, persons seek to obey and immerse themselves in the Word of God and in the community of the Word, the Church. Here, the Word of God (written and preached) becomes the resource scanned in pursuit of four-dimensional conflict resolution. Theologically for both Barth and Loder, this scanning of the Word of God is imperative, because subjective revelation (insight in Loder's terminology) must be grounded in God's objective Self-revelation in Jesus the Christ.

For Barth, the revealed insight that works to resolve the four-dimensional conflict is called "recognition." What persons recognize in this act of faith is that Christ is *for them*.

[Jesus Christ] is and does what he does for me, "pro me." . . . He is my Lord and therefore my Saviour and Mediator, my Redeemer from sin and death and the devil, my hope of service in righteousness, innocence and felicity, because he died for me and rose again for me.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Idem, CD IV/1, p. 759.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Idem, CD I/2, pp. 203-232.

⁷⁰ Idem, CD IV/1, p. 766.

This is informed knowledge of Jesus Christ according to the witness of Scripture and the community, but it is not, as such, merely intellectual knowledge. It permeates a person's whole being.

S/he knows that s/he her/himself is the human who is the possession of this Lord. But if this is what s/he knows concerning Jesus Christ and therefore her/himself, it is not an abstract or dead or neutral, but a concrete and living and—do we need to say it?—supremely and profoundly implicated knowledge. Let us say it once, it is her/his existential knowledge, her/his knowledge in the active recognition of her/his faith.⁷¹

This existential knowledge of Jesus Christ's action for the individual effects a total disturbance in a person's being, calling for radical decision, total transformation of being in relation to both "self" and "world."

We cannot speak too strongly of what takes place in it as the recognition and apprehension of Jesus Christ, as the subjective realization of the "pro me." There is no doubt that in it as this recognition there is a comprehensive disturbance and decision, an act of the human heart which carries with it, and after it, a total change in the human's whole situation.⁷²

This extremely personal recognition of Jesus Christ's action for the individual effects new self-recognition, understanding and apprehension, such that individuals wish only to be persons determined and stamped by him, set in his light.⁷³ On the one hand, they can think of the self and the self's acts only with remorse and penitence. On the other hand, they come to rely on that which has taken place for them in Jesus Christ, to have confidence and trust in him.

In the power of faith in Jesus Christ there can take place no more and no less, and it must and will take place with a supreme reality (in the sphere of the penultimate things), that as the Christian knows the overcoming of her/his pride and fall and the restoration of her/his right and life in Christ, in the light of this happening s/he can be with Christ in penitence but also in confidence.⁷⁴

Not just a new self, but, also, a new "world" is effected in recognition. When persons recognize that Jesus Christ is "for" them, they also come to understand that he is "for" the church and world, as well.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., p. 769.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 770.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 775.

It would be a strange Christian confidence if I were to have a sure trust for myself but to give up for lost the Church and the surrounding world to which I belong both in evil and in good. . . . If I know my right and my life in Jesus Christ, then I must hold to the fact, and act by it, that in him my right and life are promised to them.⁷⁵

Furthermore, the new self is free—joyfully free to work and love.

In spite of all the limitations in which s/he still exists, in the knowledge of the restoration of her/his right and life as it has taken place in Jesus Christ, s/he will become a free human. . . . As s/he bears that deep wound and accepts that bitter pain of penitence, s/he will hope for the grace of God and in that hope s/he will be at bottom a cheerful person.⁷⁶

The goal of the freedom in which the Holy Spirit acts to make persons genuinely free—free to believe in Jesus the Christ—is the freedom to be witnesses for Christ.⁷⁷ Thus, the final act of faith is “confession.” Barth defines confession as acknowledging and recognizing Jesus Christ before others. It is the Christian making known in human language for human ears and with the act of one’s human life before human eyes the revealed truth that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Godself.”⁷⁸ It is an act of “interpretation.”

Thus, in his treatment of the act of faith, Barth’s epistemological understanding gives expression to the logic of transformation. The initial situation is ignorance of divine revelation in Jesus the Christ. Four-dimensional conflict is initiated by action of the Holy Spirit revealing Jesus the Christ. Scanning is willful obedience to objective revelation. Insight is subjective recognition by the individual of Jesus Christ’s action for the individual. Tension release is the joyful freedom experienced in relationship with Christ, oneself, and others. Interpretation is confession of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

Analogia Relationis and Differential Integration

The ontological dimension of Barth’s analogical thinking about the similarities and differences between Jesus Christ and humanity is based on an analogy of relation. The *analogia relationis* should not be confused with the *analogia entis*. In the *analogia relationis*, the *being* of God is not compared and contrasted with the *being* that is human. What is compared and contrasted is *the relation-*

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 774.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 775.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 776.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 779.

ship within the being of God on the one side and *the relationship* between the being of God and that of the human on the other.⁷⁹

The basic ontological principle in which Barth's analogical thinking operates is thus in "act" not in "being." He conceives of the analogy in terms of dynamic relationship not in terms of static "being" (*analogia entis*). A "being" that is not acting is not actual. The ontology of the analogy of relationship is, therefore, of "being in action" or more specifically of "being in interaction with being."⁸⁰ Again in all of this, Jesus Christ is Master Analogue. In the act of coming to humanity in Jesus Christ, God reveals Godself. What is revealed is that God in God's own inner being is a "being in relationship."

To be sure God is One in Godself. But God is not alone. There is in God a co-existence, co-inherence and reciprocity. God in Godself is not just simple, but in the simplicity of God's essence God is threefold—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. God posits Godself, is posited by Godself, and confirms Godself in both respects, as God's own origin and also as God's own goal. God is in Godself the One who loves eternally, the One who is eternally loved, and eternal love; and in this triunity God is the original and source of every I-Thou, of the I which is eternally from and to the Thou and therefore supremely I.⁸¹

It is this existence in "I-Thou" relationship within the inner divine being which is echoed and reflected in God's eternal covenant with humanity. God repeats *ad extra* a relationship that is proper to Godself. In other words, human creation in the "image of God" is creation in and for "I-Thou" relationship.

If "God for the human" is the eternal covenant revealed and effective in time in the humanity of Jesus, in this decision of the Creator for the creature there arises a relationship which is not alien to the Creator, to God as God, but we might almost say appropriate and natural to God. God repeats in this relationship *ad extra* a relationship proper to Godself in God's inner divine essence. Entering into this relationship, God makes a copy of Godself.⁸²

Barth reads the Genesis accounts of creation through these Christological lenses. He there discovers that "male and female being is the prototype of all I-Thou, of all the individuality in which human and human differ from and

⁷⁹ Barth, *CD III/2*, p. 220.

⁸⁰ Lee, "Karl Barth's Use of Analogy . . .," p. 146. See also the helpful discussion of the dynamic nature of Barth's ontology by Sueo Oshima, "Barth's *Analogia Relationis* and Heidegger's Ontological Difference" *Journal of Religion* 53 (1973): 176–194.

⁸¹ Barth, *CD III/2*, p. 218.

⁸² *Ibid.*

yet belong to each other."⁸³ This God given "existence in relationship" with another establishes in humanity the capacity to relate to the Divine Other.

In God's own being and sphere there is a counterpart: a genuine but harmonious self-encounter and self-discovery; a free co-existence and co-operation; an open confrontation and reciprocity. The human is the repetition of this divine form of life; its copy and reflection. . . . Thus the "tertium comparationis," the analogy between God and the human, is simply the existence of the I and the Thou in confrontation.⁸⁴

God created humankind in this fashion because:

God willed the existence of a being which in all its non-deity and therefore its differentiation can be a real partner; which is capable of action and responsibility in relation to God; to which God's own divine form of life is not alien; which in a creaturely repetition, as a copy and imitation, can be a bearer of this form of life. The human was created as this being.⁸⁵

God created humankind in the divine image, male and female, because God desired to establish a covenant relationship with humanity.⁸⁶

The analogy of relation is both vertical and horizontal. Three I-Thou relationships are correlated: God to Godself in similarity and difference (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit); humans to humans in similarity and difference (male and female); and God to humanity and humanity to God in similarity and difference. For all three, Jesus Christ is the Master Analogue. Christ relates to God in a God-God "I-Thou" relationship, to humanity in a human-human "I-Thou" relationship, and God to humanity and humanity to God in a God-human "I-Thou" relationship.

To help analyze further Barth's view of relational existence, I want to introduce a different analogical model, the one developed by James Loder and James Neidhardt. To understand the significance of this alternative analogical model, it will be useful to remind oneself of Hans Urs Von Balthasar's comment that Barth's thought resembled "an intellectual hour-glass where God and the human meet in the center through Jesus Christ."

There is no other point of encounter between the top and bottom portions of the glass. And even as the sand must run from top to bottom, so God's revelation is necessarily the original impulse for the whole train

⁸³ Idem, *CD* III/4, p. 150.

⁸⁴ Idem, *CD* III/1, p. 185.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 184-185.

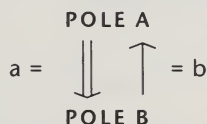
⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 185.

of contact that ensues. In the last analysis, however, everything rests upon that critical point of contact in the center.⁸⁷

Loder and Neidhardt call the analogical model they have developed a “differential integrative relationship analogy.”⁸⁸ It makes use of a Möbius band model similar to Balthasar’s hour-glass image.

In this kind of a model, a dynamic asymmetric relationship binds the conceptual levels (or poles) of the analogy together. The relationship is differential in that the distinction between the levels is maintained through its asymmetric character and integrative because it brings the levels together to form a bipolar unity. The levels are themselves reciprocally related given that one implies the other and hierarchically structured since the “lower” cannot be fully understood without reference to the “higher.”⁸⁹ Thus, the two levels are governed by a form of Michael Polanyi’s “marginal control” principle.⁹⁰ That is, the hierarchical aspect to the interplay of the levels results in “the ‘lower’ level having a value and significance in and of itself, while being given its full meaning only in relation to the ‘higher’ level which exerts a controlling or ‘molding’ function.”⁹¹

Loder and Neidhardt represent the analogy’s asymmetric relations by means of two contrasting arrows embedded in the one side of a Möbius band. In this essay, these asymmetric relations shall be represented this way:



Poles A and B represent the two levels of the bipolar relational unity. The arrows (a) and (b) represent the asymmetric relations, such that (a) grounds,

⁸⁷ Balthasar, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 170.

⁸⁸ James E. Loder and W. Jim Neidhardt, *The Knight’s Move: Kierkegaard and Modern Science* (Colorado Springs: Helmers and Howard, 1992), especially pages 35–60.

⁸⁹ See, *Ibid.*, pp. 54–58; and W. Jim Neidhardt, “The Creative Dialogue Between Human Intelligibility and Reality—Relational Aspects of Natural Science and Theology,” *The Asbury Theological Journal* 41 2 (1986): 59–83.

⁹⁰ “Marginal control represents a condition in which the bipolar structure’s ‘lower’ level is controlled by the laws governing its constituent components, but is also controlled by being subject through its boundary conditions to determination by the laws regulating the ‘higher’ level. In other words, the ‘lower’ level is said to be subject to dual control by the laws applying to its component particulars in themselves and by the distinctive laws that govern the comprehensive entity, i.e. the ‘higher’ level, formed by them.” *Ibid.*, pp. 54–55. See, Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1983); and *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

molds, guides, controls pole B as (b) responds, points to, is dependent upon pole A. Together, the arrows and the poles form a feedback loop. Pole A reaches downward toward pole B influencing it, while simultaneously responding to pole B. Out of this interplay, dynamic differential unity emerges.⁹²

We have chosen to work with this rather complex understanding of relationship analogies as opposed to Pohlmann's simpler and more familiar one for two reasons.⁹³ First, the hierarchical structuring of the poles of the analogy in the model allows clearer differentiation of the human, divine-human, and divine relational spheres. This is important, because such differentiation eventually leads us to discover the parent-child relation (not the male-female relation) as the most congruent analogatum in human existence for the divine-human original, even as the male-female relation corresponds most closely to the divine-divine original. Second, by means of this analogy as ontological principle combined with the logic of transformation as epistemological principle, the possibility of conducting interdisciplinary dialogue with Barth's theology emerges. The differential integrative relationship analogy and the logic of transformation also express themselves structurally and functionally in human scientific understandings.⁹⁴

To answer the question of exactly how the dialogue is to be conducted with theological as well as philosophical integrity, let us turn our attention directly to Barth's view of interdisciplinary method.

BARTH'S VIEW OF INTERDISCIPLINARY METHOD

For Barth, theological anthropology is foundationally grounded in the revealed Word of God, Jesus Christ, and makes a truth claim. It speaks not of the appearance of humankind but of the reality. It speaks not about outward features but of the inward. It speaks not about a part of the human essence but of the whole person. Thus, theological anthropology is quite distinct from other anthropologies. Barth puts the question of the relationship between theological and nontheological anthropology quite clearly.

The question which we have now to decide is whether we can at least orientate ourselves by this anthropology which is independent of theology, i.e., by one of its concrete expressions. In relation to the human, can we profit by its methods and results? An even more radical question

⁹² Ibid., pp. 56-57.

⁹³ See Horst George Pohlmann, *Analogia Entis Oder Analogia Fidei? Die Frage der Analogie bei Karl Barth* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965), p. 108.

⁹⁴ See Loder, *The Transforming Moment*; and Loder and Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move*.

is whether we ought deliberately to regard theological anthropology merely as a species, placing it within the framework of a general non-theological anthropology, and establishing and securing it on the basis of the latter.⁹⁵

In answering these questions, Barth distinguishes between two types of non-theological anthropology. The two types are speculative anthropology, which might adequately be called “ideology”; and the exact sciences, which include physiology, biology, psychology, and sociology.

According to Barth, speculative anthropology, whether based in pure self-intuition or developed from hypotheses of exact science, supposes that one can begin absolutely with human judgment “and then legitimately and necessarily push forward until [one] finally reaches an absolute synthesis, a system of truth exhaustive of reality as a whole.”⁹⁶ It assumes human capacity to engage in true self-analysis.⁹⁷ As such, speculative anthropology is for Barth an enemy, because it is diametrically opposed to the fundamental assertion of his theological anthropology which states that “we are not able to see the essence and nature of the human apart from the Word of God.”⁹⁸ Hence, he concludes in answer to his original questions:

We cannot orientate ourselves by their attempts. And there can certainly be no question of theological anthropology being constrained or even able to enter the framework of an anthropology which has such a different basis. The different origin of theological anthropology is its frontier against all speculative anthropology. And it goes without saying that it must always guard this frontier.⁹⁹

Barth, on the other hand, does not see the exact sciences as enemies. They are “basically harmless” because they do not claim to have the final truth once and for all delivered. Barth makes this more positive assessment of science’s potential relationship to theological anthropology on the basis of the constraints and limitations imposed upon science by its own scientific method.

According to Barth’s quite accurate understanding of scientific method, no positive assertions are final. All propositions are approximations and provisional. Science asserts relative, not absolute truth. It investigates human possibilities, not the reality of the whole person. “With more or less consensus of opinion sciences have at their disposal in every period temporarily author-

⁹⁵ Barth, *CD* III/2, pp. 21–22.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

itative formulae which sum up the results of previous research, and which indicate hypotheses and pointers for future research."¹⁰⁰ Science maintains that these hypotheses and formulations remain tentative. They are neither axioms nor revealed dogma. Exact science is concerned with the phenomena, not with the essence or being of the human. Whereas, the latter (essence), not the former (phenomena) is of central concern in theological anthropology.

Strictly speaking, what physiology and biology, psychology and sociology can offer, will not be statements to the effect that the human in her/his physical, psychological and sociological existence is or is not this or that, but statements to the effect that the human as a phenomenon is to be seen and understood by the human according to this or that standpoint and in this or that aspect of her/his constitution and development, as determined by current knowledge of these facts accessible to human inquiry.¹⁰¹

Barth concludes from this that the exact sciences can give theological anthropology "precise information and relevant data which can be of service in the wider investigation of the nature of the human, and can help to build up a technique for dealing with these questions."¹⁰² Exact science presupposes human existence and then moves to investigate the question of "how" the human is, the question of "what limits" and "what conditions" enable the human to be. Consequently, exact science is not in opposition to theological anthropology, because its tasks are different. Science is concerned with the possibilities of the human phenomena; theological anthropology is concerned with the reality of the whole person. Science's truth is relative and temporal. Theological anthropology—with its basis in the Word of God—makes a truth claim. Consequently, if science attempts to answer the questions that theological anthropology addresses, it moves out of the limits of its own self-defined discipline.

Barth concludes positively with regard to the relationship between theological anthropology and the exact sciences.

The anthropology of science does not necessarily derive from the arid place in which the Word of God has not yet or is no longer heard. It is not necessarily an unspiritual work. . . . To the extent that it remains within its limits, and does not attempt to be more or less than exact science, it is a good work; as good as the human her/himself as God created her/him. Hence our differentiation from it need not imply op-

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁰² Ibid.

position. Opposition is required only if it becomes axiomatic, dogmatic, and speculative.¹⁰³

Despite this assertion, Barth is accused of proposing and utilizing a reductionistic model of interdisciplinary dialogue, whereas in actuality, he is proposing a corrective model, while in practice not moving beyond the tandem model.¹⁰⁴ Clearly, Barth sees and respects exact science as a separate discipline. But as Robert E. Willis has noted,

Barth tends to minimize, and occasionally to overlook, the empirical givenness and complexity of the creaturely, historical sphere, in favor of the insights that come directly out of salvation history, i.e., christological description. Thus, while not excluding entirely the significance of the "phenomena" of the human's historical, political and social life, and the disciplines concerned with their study, he never quite arrives at the point of indicating directly their bearing on the theological venture.¹⁰⁵

Barth acknowledges this criticism in volume three of his *Church Dogmatics*.

It will perhaps be asked in criticism why I have not tackled the obvious scientific question posed in this context. It was my original belief that this would be necessary, but I later saw that there can be no scientific problems, objections or aids in relation to what Holy Scripture and the Christian Church understand by the divine work of creation. . . . The relevant task of dogmatics at this point has been found exclusively in

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 24–25.

¹⁰⁴ For a typology of interdisciplinary models, see William R. Rogers, "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Moral and Religious Development: A Critical Overview" in *Toward Moral and Religious Maturity* (Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett Company, 1980), pp. 12–17. In the *reductionistic model*, one discipline or perspective states in effect that it can interpret within its purview any given phenomena. The *tandem model* protects against the imperialistic tendency of the reductionistic one; each discipline is given an independent sphere of experience to investigate with its own methods, language, discourse, and theories. The *corrective model* partially resolves the fragmentary difficulties of the tandem model without reverting to reductionism. In the corrective model, one discipline or perspective attends to its own field and methods of inquiry, while remaining open to helpful interpretations of human experience emanating from other disciplines and perspectives. More genuinely dialogical, but not without other serious drawbacks is the *parallel abstractions model*. In this model, two or more independent perspectives or fields challenge each other by contributing both descriptions and normative statements on an essentially equal basis. From this encounter, a deeper more integrative understanding of human experience can emerge, but the serious weakness of this model is in the tendency for the dialogue to be divorced from empirical reality. "The fascinating and scholarly work may be simply abstraction, removed from the everyday suffering, doubting, wondering rhythms of life." Scholars who utilize this model are, therefore, accurately accused of "living in an ivory tower." The *constructive-relational model* engages genuine interdisciplinary dialogue, as does the constructive-relational model, but more diligently preserves proximity to empirical reality and more consistently is open to methods appropriate to diverse disciplines.

¹⁰⁵ Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth*, p. 430.

repeating the "saga," and I have found this task far finer and far more rewarding than all the dilettante entanglements in which I might otherwise have found myself.¹⁰⁶

Even though Barth steers a course away from empirical science, he does not denigrate the scientific enterprise. Rather, he assumes that future theological inquiry into the relation of theology and science will be rewarding and productive.

There is free scope for natural science beyond what theology describes as the work of the Creator. And theology can and must move freely where science which really is science, and not secretly a pagan *Gnosis* or religion, has its appointed limit. I am of the opinion, however, that future workers in the field of the Christian doctrine of creation will find many problems worth pondering in defining the point and manner of this twofold boundary.¹⁰⁷

Thus, Barth does not reduce exact science to a subcategory of theological anthropology; rather, he tends to so limit the corrective contribution of exact science to theology that the disciplines remain in effect separate and distinct. In other words, they remain in "tandem." But still, Barth affirms that exact science can make positive contributions to a "wider investigation" of the nature of humankind. He, therefore, proposes a corrective interdisciplinary relationship.

In light of this and the nature of the interdisciplinary dialogue of the corrective model, the charge of reductionism becomes quite understandable, even though unfounded. In the corrective model, the primary discipline (in this case theological anthropology) provides both the framework and norms for incorporating the interpretations and understandings of other disciplines. Thus, Barth did not exclude science in principle. He simply preferred, faced with the complexity of the task, to stay within the confines of his own discipline and leave for others the task of investigating the relationship between disciplines.

By remaining within his own discipline, what Barth does positively for those who will take up the challenge of investigating theology in relation to exact science is establish a sound theological basis from which to inquire into the phenomena of the human. In other words, Barth's understanding of theological anthropology is available to function as the theological presuppo-

¹⁰⁶ Barth, *CD* III/1, pp. ix-x.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. x.

sitional foundation otherwise assumed in scientific inquiry. Here, note that Barth's understanding of theology as this presuppositional foundation is not dogmatic in the sense of being infallible. For Barth, theological anthropology is a human work. It is not itself the Word of God, but human reflection on the Word of God. Theological anthropology is not, therefore, without the possibility of human sin.

Not merely in the doctrine of God, but here too in the doctrine of the human, we have always to reckon with the possibility that theology as a human work may and will seriously fail to do justice "in concreto" to its object.¹⁰⁸

But still, theological anthropology makes a truth claim.

Theological anthropology has not to do merely with (the human's) possibilities, but with her/his reality. . . . Hence it may not frame its principles merely as temporarily and relatively valid hypotheses; as contributions to the wider investigation of the nature of the human and the development of a technique for dealing with these questions. It has a responsibility to make the claim of truth. We repeat that this does not mean that it cannot err, that it does not need continually to correct and improve itself.¹⁰⁹

Paradoxically, this means that theological anthropology is held by Barth to be true and at the same time open to correction. Exact science may point to and suggest theological anthropology areas which need to be rethought, even though it cannot provide new theological insight independent of reflection upon the Word of God. In the next section of this essay, psychology will function in this corrective fashion as Barth's understanding of the *analogia relationis* is further analyzed, critiqued, and reformulated.

It should be mentioned in conjunction with this that for Barth, nature operating under its own laws is controlled at its upper boundary by divine principle.

The creaturely is made serviceable to the divine and does actually serve it. It is used by God as God's organ or instrument. Its creatureliness is not impaired, but it is given by God a special function or character. Being qualified and claimed by God for co-operation, it co-operates in such a way that the whole is still an action which is specifically divine.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Idem, *CD III/2*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 25.

¹¹⁰ Barth, *CD IV/2*, p. 557.

Significantly, this dialectical understanding of divine-human relational interaction itself accords with Polanyi's understanding of dual boundary control and the ontological leveling of reality described earlier in the differential integrative relational analogy. Thus, in accord with Barth, Polanyi, Loder, and Neidhardt, theology can be understood as the study of the contingent relationship between creation and the science of the created order, on the one hand, and God its Creator, on the other. This is because science leaves open the ultimate ontological questions that theology investigates.

III

Barth's *Analogia Relationis* and Male-Female Ordering

Thus far in this essay, we have sought to establish the methodological basis upon which analysis and reformulation of Barth's understanding of the *analogia relationis* and its ordering principle can be conducted in correctional dialogue with the human sciences. We may now turn directly to that analysis and reformulation.

FIRST AND SECOND CREATION NARRATIVES

Barth first systematically developed his analogical teaching concerning human creation in the image of God in the midst of exegeting Genesis 1:26-27. In that exegesis, he translates the first part of verse 26 from Hebrew into German with the words, "Lasset uns Menschen machen in unserem Urbild nach unserem Vorbild!"¹¹¹ *Urbild* means "original image" (or "prototype"), whereas *Vorbild* has the sense of "pattern." In choosing these words over "Abbild" (reflection) and "Nachbild" (copy) for the original Hebrew substantives *zelem* and *demut*, Barth declares directly and by inference that the *Imago Dei* refers primarily to God and only secondarily to the human being.¹¹²

He finds the key to understanding the original *Imago Dei* in the "us" and "our" of the verse. These words point to the "non-solitariness of God" on the one hand and God's free agreement with Godself on the other. "In God's own being there is a counterpart; a genuine but harmonious self-encounter and

¹¹¹ Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatic* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag and Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1932-1967), III/1, p. 222.

¹¹² For the significance of the German translations of the Hebrew, see John Rodman Williams, Jr., *The Doctrine of Imago Dei in Contemporary Theology: A Study in Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1954).

self-discovery; a free co-existence and co-operation; an open confrontation and reciprocity."¹¹³ Thus, the original image and pattern of God in God's inner being is dynamic confrontation within unanimity.

In the creation of humankind, this original image and pattern (Urbild and Vorbild) exists as reflection and copy (Abbild and Nachbild).¹¹⁴ That is, the encounter and discovery within God is copied and imitated in God's relation with humankind.¹¹⁵ For in the creation of humankind "a real other, a true counterpart to God, enters the creaturely sphere."¹¹⁶ The rest of the created order exists "in juxtaposition" and "in a certain full scale co-existence" with God, but not in the "true confrontation and reciprocity which are actualized in the reality of an 'I' and a 'Thou.'"¹¹⁷ The *Imago Dei* expresses both a relationship within God and the corresponding relationship of God with the human being. The *ad intra* relation is the original image and pattern. The *ad extra* relation is a copy or imitation of this original.

Humans copy and imitate the original in the fact that they are the counterpart of other humans and have in them a counterpart—the coexistence and cooperation within Godself being repeated in the relations of person to person.¹¹⁸ Human creation in the image of God is not *homo solitarius*, but *homo relationis*—"male and female he created them." Just as God is not the solitary God but the Triune God, humankind created in the image of God, male and female, so humankind is created for the genuine mutuality and reciprocity of I-Thou relationship.

Scripturally, this assertion is based in Barth's exegesis of Genesis 1:27. As he reads the verse, 1:27a ("So God created humankind in his own image") is defined by 1:27c ("male and female he created them."). The primal form of humanity for Barth is the co-humanity of man and woman. "Male and female being is the prototype of all I-Thou, of all the individuality in which humans differ from and yet belong to each other."¹¹⁹ From this initial grounding of the *Imago Dei* in gender differentiation, Barth ultimately extends the *analogia relationis* to include not only man in relation to woman, but also man to man and woman to woman. He thus includes all possible relations. Thus Barth is not saying that sexual differentiation is the *Imago Dei*. "The differentiation and relationship between I and Thou in the divine being, in the sphere of

¹¹³ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* 4 vols., eds. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936–1969), III/1, p. 183.

¹¹⁴ Barth, *KD* III/1, p. 207.

¹¹⁵ Barth, *CD* III/1, p. 185.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

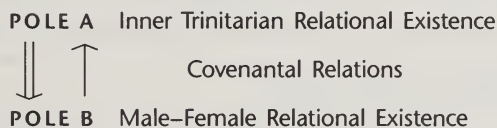
¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹¹⁹ *Idem*, *CD* III/4, p. 150.

the *Elohim*, are not identical with the differentiation and relationship between male and female."¹²⁰ That I-Thou existence takes the form of sexual differentiation and relation in the human "belongs to the creatureliness of humankind rather than the divine likeness."¹²¹

It is an accurate summary to say that Barth discerns in the first creation narrative all three analogous relations: the original relation of God in Godself, the covenant relation of God and humankind, and the human relation of male and female. The *tertium comparationis* among the three is that in each there is an I and a Thou in confrontation.

Now when we use the differential integrative relationship analogy described in the previous section, what we have is the outer-divine (I-Thou) image *binding* together the inner-divine (I-Thou) original to the male-female (I-Thou) reflection to form a dynamic, unitary divine-human relational structure. When seen in this light, the differential integrative relationship analogy faithfully represents Barth's analogical understanding of human creation in the image of God, male and female. That is the case at least when, in the following diagram, pole A is "inner Trinitarian relational existence," pole B is "male-female relational existence," and the dynamic unitary structure is covenantal relations.



In the second creation narrative, Barth finds further support for his contention that human creation in the *Imago Dei* is defined by the statement, "male and female he created them." For him, Genesis 2:18-25 has only one theme—the completion of human creation by the addition of the woman to the man. "Everything aims at the one fact, to wit, that God did not create man alone, as a single human being, but in the unequal duality of male and female."¹²²

"It is not good that the man should be alone," because in the creation of the male alone humankind remains incomplete. "If created man were solitary," Barth says, "creation as a whole would not be good, because it would then lack its internal basis in the covenant. To be God's partner in this covenant, man himself needed a partner,"¹²³ but not just any partner. What is needed is a being resembling man but different from him. Animals cannot relieve

¹²⁰ Idem, *CD* III/1, p. 196.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid., p. 288.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 290.

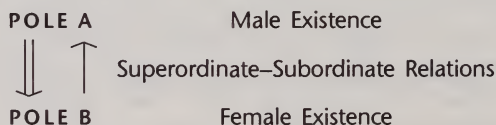
Adam of his aloneness because they are not essentially like Adam. Only woman is found to be a suitable helpmate, not only because of her similarity with Adam, but because of her "similarity in difference."¹²⁴ Woman is the only divine creation who can be an "I" and a "Thou" to man. She is the one who is needed. Still, Barth says, despite creation in interdependence,¹²⁵ because it is woman who is "taken out of" man and man who "chooses" and acknowledges her as his companion (and not vice versa),¹²⁶ the male-female relationship is structured or ordered.

The encounter of man and woman is not in any sense an encounter of two freely disposing or disposable factors which can be shaped or reversed at will. Only as ordered by God at creation can this encounter be normal and good in its relationship to God.¹²⁷

This order is such that the male is always superordinate, and the female is subordinate. Man is "her lord." Woman is "his elect."¹²⁸ In other words, human creation in the image of God reflects covenantal outer-divine relational existence, as well as inner-divine existence. Barth states this directly.

Behind the relationship of man and woman . . . there stands the controlling *original* of the relationship between the God Yahweh-Elohim and God's people Israel . . . This duality, the covenant . . . is the original of which the essence of the human as the being of man and woman can only be the reflection and copy.¹²⁹

In terms of Loder and Neidhardt's analogical approach, covenantal ordering of relational existence (superordination and subordination) binds male and female together into a dynamic, unitary relational structure, just as it binds God and humanity together. The differential integrative relationship analogy faithfully represents Barth's analogical understanding of human creation in Genesis 2 when pole A is taken to be the human male, pole B is the human female, and the dynamic unitary structure is the superordinate-subordinate ordering of covenantal relational existence.



¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Woman is dependent upon man in that she is "bone of his bone" and "flesh of his flesh." Man is dependent upon woman for completion.

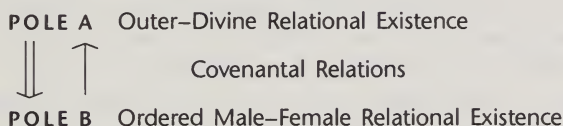
¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 311.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 308.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 306.

¹²⁹ Idem., CD III/2, p. 297.

More completely differentiated, pole A is outer-divine relational existence (divine-human), pole B is ordered male-female existence, and the dynamic unitary structure is covenantal relations.



Thus, in Barth's analogical program, the male-female relation reflects both inner and outer divine originals.

JESUS CHRIST AND THE *IMAGO DEI*

Regarding Jesus Christ and human creation in the image of God, Barth contends that "the humanity of Jesus Christ is the image of God."¹³⁰ To understand this assertion in light of Jesus Christ being both God and human, we will need to proceed slowly and carefully. We will look first at Jesus Christ who is God, then at Jesus Christ who is human. In the process, we expect that the complexity, simplicity, and importance of the statement for Barth's understanding of human creation in the image of God, male and female, will become clear.

To begin with, Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. As such, Jesus Christ is not "the image of God" but God's own Self.

God in Godself is not just simple, but in the simplicity of God's essence God is threefold . . . in this triunity God is the original and source of every I and Thou, of the I which is eternally from and to the Thou and therefore supremely I.¹³¹

In other words, being "from" and "to" God, Jesus Christ is "God for God."

Moving to the relationship, which God repeats *ad extra*, Barth says that "God for the human" is "the eternal covenant revealed and effective in time in the humanity of Jesus."¹³² In Jesus Christ, humanity is "confronted by the divine Other."¹³³ He is "the divine Counterpart of every human."¹³⁴ "Whatever it may mean for humankind in general that this human too exists among

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 219.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 218.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 134.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

all others, it certainly means concretely that in him the divine address and summons to each and every person is actualized."¹³⁵ Jesus Christ is not only "God for God" but "God for the human."

Moving to a consideration of the human Jesus in relationship to God, Barth notes that there is a divinity of the human person Jesus which "consists in the fact that God exists immediately and directly in and with him, this creature. It consists in the fact that he is the divine Saviour in person, that the glory of God triumphs in him, that he alone and exclusively is human as the living Word of God, that he is in the activity of the grace of God. It consists, in short, in the fact that he is the human for God."¹³⁶ This divinity of the human Jesus is the *ad extra* relation, proper to God in God's essence experienced "from the cosmos." As such, Jesus is "determined by God for life with God." He is "the human for God."

But because the "solitary human" is not good (God willing to create and establish his covenant with two-in-representation), the divinity of Jesus does not exhaust the *ad extra* relation experienced from the cosmos. There is, also, his humanity. Jesus is affected by the existence of other human beings. He actively makes the cause of other people his own. He suffers and sacrifices to meet the needs of other people. Ultimately, he gives himself to these others in such a way that they are delivered and renewed. Thus, he is determined by these "others" and their needs, even as he is determined by God in his divinity. He is "from," "to," and "with" other humans. He is "the human for the human." Since, however, there is a glory from which the human Jesus already comes, his humanity is the image of the original relation within the divine being.¹³⁷

This does not mean that Jesus' humanity is a repetition and reflection of his divinity. "The humanity of Jesus . . . is the repetition and reflection of Godself, no more and no less. It is the image of God, the *Imago Dei*."¹³⁸ There is a difference between the relationship between the human Jesus and humankind and the prior relation between Father and Son. Yet there is also similarity. It is the similarity of relationship (*analogia relationis*), not being (*analogia entis*). Thus the eternal love of Father and Son is the love addressed analogically to humankind by the human Jesus. Inner-divine existence takes outer form in Jesus' humanity, and "in this form, for all the disparity of sphere and object, remains true to itself and therefore reflects itself."¹³⁹ On the other

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 148.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 221.

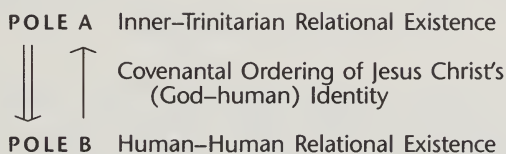
¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 220.

hand, the divinity of the human Jesus is the relation in which Jesus is the "human for God." It is the reflected image of outer-divine relationship, "God for the human." That is, the image of God in Jesus Christ is twofold. It "consists in the fact that, as he is for God, he is also for the human, for his fellows."¹⁴⁰

In summary, we may say Jesus Christ, who is God, participates in inner-divine (I-Thou) relationship with Father and Holy Spirit, and in outer-divine (I-Thou) relationship with humanity. Jesus Christ, who is human, participates in the image of inner-divine I-Thou relationship with humanity, and in the reflected image of outer-divine relationship with God.

Now, to put this in terms of the differential integrative relationship analogy with which we have been working, Jesus Christ binds inner-Trinitarian relational existence and human relational existence into a dynamic unitary structure. That at least is the case when, in the diagram below, pole A is inner-Trinitarian relational existence, pole B is human relational existence, and the dynamic of the unitary structure is the covenantal ordering of Jesus Christ's God-human identity.



Regarding the order or structure of these relational analogies within Jesus, we see immediately that because the human Jesus is the image of God and the divine Jesus in relationship with Father and Holy Spirit is the original, there is a necessary ordering within the being of Jesus Christ, who is true God and true human. His divinity is superordinate, his humanity subordinate.

In the place of the human stands the one who is God Godself in the human; and in the place of God stands the same one who is the human in Jesus. And in this wholeness and oneness the relationship of God and the human, of the human and God, in Jesus is itself a meaningfully ordered relation. Here already there manifestly operate superior and inferior, lordship and service, command and obedience, leadership and following—and this in a constant and irreversible relation.¹⁴¹

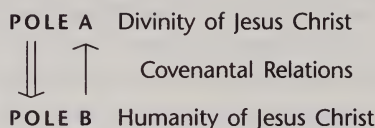
Thus for Barth without contradiction, Jesus Christ is the "Elector" and the "Elect" on the ground of the *analogia relationis*.

Again in terms of the differential integrative relationship analogy, we have

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 222.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 341.

covenantal (superordinate-subordinate) ordering of relational existence binding the divinity and the humanity of Jesus Christ into a dynamic, unitary relational identity structure. Here, pole A is the divinity of Jesus Christ, pole B is his humanity, and the dynamic unitary structure is the superordinate-subordinate ordering of covenantal (divine-human) relational existence.



Thus far, we have dealt with the christological foundations of Barth's analogical thinking regarding human creation in the image of God, male and female. With them before us, we will now look more explicitly at how they are evidenced in Barth's understanding of humanity in general and in the male-female relation in specific.

THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST AND HUMANITY IN GENERAL

For Barth, "the ontological determination of humanity is grounded in the fact that one human among all others is the human Jesus."¹⁴² As already noted, there stands between our human nature and that of Jesus Christ the reality of our sin and the mystery of his identity with God. This means that when it comes to knowing the human nature of Jesus, as God's covenant partner, and knowing our human nature, we are limited to a correspondence of unlike realities, or at most, to a similarity in difference. The relation between Jesus' humanity and our humanity is understood only by an analogy of relation. Given the limitation of our having only an analogous understanding of human nature in Jesus Christ, Barth seeks to discern what Christ does reveal concerning human creation in the *Imago Dei*.

From Jesus' existence as "the human for God," Barth discerns for humankind in general that the real human lives with God as God's covenant partner. More precisely, real humans come from God and God moves toward them; they are conditioned by the fact that God has enacted a plan for their deliverance. They are not created as ends in themselves but to bring glory to God. Moreover, standing under the Lordship of God and acting in correspondence with the divine action on their behalf (doing justice to the grace addressed to them), real humans are active participants in what God is doing (in the history of the covenant) rendering service to the divine.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 142.

With regard to his existence as "the human for the human," Barth notes that if the human Jesus is for humanity, then the form of humanity in general must be in correspondence with this. Since humanity in Jesus is co-humanity, our humanity cannot be an isolated one lived in abstraction from others. We act against ourselves, when we come out with a solitary "I am." The "I" of our true humanity, as revealed in Jesus, implies a "Thou." Barth's minimal definition of humanity is: "the being of the human in encounter."¹⁴³ Put another way, "the basic form of our humanity" is co-humanity—mutual interpersonal relational existence. "If it is not co-human, if it is not in some way an approximation to being in the encounter of I and Thou, it is not human."¹⁴⁴

Moreover, as co-humanity, the basic form of our humanity is decisively seen in the fact that "we cannot say human without having to say male or female and also male and female. The human exists in this differentiation, in this duality."¹⁴⁵ There is no solitary human, but only man or woman, man and woman. We are all male or female, and therefore, male and female. Barth infers from all this that sexual dimorphism is the one and only structural differentiation of human existence. He recognizes, of course, the existence of other essential and nonessential differentiations, but does not perceive them to be "structural in character." That is, a person is not necessarily a mother or a father, a brother or sister, gifted or not gifted, a person of "this particular time or sphere, or race."¹⁴⁶ Rather, in all of these essential and nonessential but secondary relationships and distinctions, the person is always and "primarily male or female, male and female,"¹⁴⁷ if a spouse, either a husband or a wife; if a parent, either a father or a mother.

Barth contends further that since sexual differentiation is structural, the interaction and interdependence of this duality is distinctive and foundational for all other I-Thou encounters. In other words, the powerful dynamics of male and female are not confined to what we normally think of as sexual relations and/or marriage.

In the wider circle around the narrower it is to be found in the relationship of fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, brothers and sisters, and in similar relationships it plays its fruitful but perhaps disturbing and even dangerous role in the whole sphere of education and instruction, and the life of churches of all confessions.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 247.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 285.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 286.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 288.

Barth argues, in light of this, that because sexual differentiation, as male and female, pervades all of life and is the only genuine distinction in humanity, it can and must correspond to the real distinction within God. "As the Father of the Son and the Son of the Father, God is Godself I and Thou, confronting Godself and yet always one and the same in the Holy Ghost."¹⁴⁹

Barth extends this reasoning to God's external relatedness. The male-female encounter corresponds to the I-Thou encounter characteristic of the inner-Trinitarian relatedness, which expresses itself *ad extra*. Human, male-female relatedness can also be understood as a reflection of God's being toward another. Here we find Barth drawing the second analogy between God's covenant relation with humanity and the male-female relation. Barth draws this second analogy not on the basis of his exegesis of the creation narratives, but on his understanding of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. Here, the "*tertium comparationis*" is that on both sides, there is a firm and genuine covenant.

A covenant means co-existence for better for worse. It is genuine if it is between two partners who are obviously not identical. And it is sure if there is no question of the dissolution of the relationship between the two partners.¹⁵⁰

More than this Barth will not say, for apart from the similarity of there being I-Thou relationship, "everything is different."

It is significant in light of Barth's further contention that the male-female relation is reciprocal, not "one-sided" like the divine-human relation, that he still insists on the necessity of its superordinate-subordinate ordering.¹⁵¹ He uses the alphabet to illustrate the order.

Man and woman are not an A and a second A whose being and relationship can be described like the two halves of an hour glass, which are obviously two, but absolutely equal and therefore interchangeable. Man and woman are an A and a B, and cannot, therefore, be equated. . . . A precedes B, and B follows A. Order means succession. It means preceding and following. It means super- and sub-ordination.¹⁵²

Thus, the male is "the inspirer, leader and initiator in their common being and action."¹⁵³ He is "the superior, the first, . . . the bearer of primary responsibility."¹⁵⁴ The female is "the second, the led, the one who must follow up

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 324.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 320.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 321.

¹⁵² Idem., CD III/4, p. 169.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 170.

¹⁵⁴ Idem., CD III/2, p. 314.

the initiative"¹⁵⁵ of the male. "Her task and function is to actualize the fellowship in which man can only precede her, stimulating, leading, and inspiring."¹⁵⁶ Still Barth says,

When it is a question of the true order which God the Creator has established, succession, and therefore preceding and following, super and subordination, does not mean any inner inequality between those who stand in this succession and are subject to this order. It does indeed reveal the inequality. But it does not do so without immediately confirming their equality. In so far as it demands subjection and obedience, it affects equally all whom it concerns. It does not confer any privilege or do any injustice. It lays a duty on all, but it gives to all their right. It does not deny honour to any, but gives to each his own honour.¹⁵⁷

In other words, Barth maintains that male and female are equal even though their relation is structured by the principle of superordinate-subordinate ordering. That this is a proposition fraught with difficulty is apparent to both Barth and to us. In transposing the nonreciprocal order of the divine-human covenant to an equal and reciprocal human-human relation, Barth creates an apparent contradiction. He recognizes the difficulty.

Every word is dangerous and liable to be misunderstood when we try to characterize this order. But it exists. And everything else is null and void if its existence is ignored, if we refuse to recognize it as an element in the divine command, if it is left to chance.¹⁵⁸

At this crucial point in our analysis, the alternative model of analogy proves useful again. It enables us to see that Barth's argument has set up "circular complementarity relationship analogy" between his analogical understanding of (A) male-female relational existence compared and contrasted to inner-Trinitarian relational existence and (B) male-female relational existence compared and contrasted to covenantal relational existence. According to Loder and Neidhardt in a "circular complementarity relationship analogy,"

(A) represents the set of observational concepts associated with one pole of a bipolar unitary structure; (B) represents the complementary set of observational concepts associated with the other pole of the unitary structure. As (B) is "listened to," knowledge of (A) fades out: (A) is known only indirectly in memory. As (A) is "listened to," knowledge of

¹⁵⁵ Idem., *CD* III/4, p. 173.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 169.

(B) fades out: (B) is known only indirectly in memory. As one circles back and forth between the sets of observational concepts associated with each pole, exhaustive knowledge emerges.¹⁵⁹

Reading Barth's paradoxical statements regarding the equality and inequality of male and female as an instance of a circular complementarity relationship analogy, one can begin to appreciate the complexity of Barth's analogical program. According to Loder and Neidhardt, a circular complementarity relationship analogy may simply be a "projected" aspect of a more complete differential integrative relationship analogy. In light of this, we must ask in relation to Barth's analogical understanding of human creation in the image of God, male and female: Is there a better analogatum in human creation than the ordered male-female relation? Does not the human phenomenon direct us to a different analogatum, that of parent-child relationship, and ought we not to peruse the implications of this dimension of the human phenomenon?¹⁶⁰ Could it be that he is forced to insist upon the superordinate-subordinate ordering of the male-female relation, because he fails to take notice of the other structurally necessary interpersonal relation—the parent-child relation—the equivalent of the age variable?

PARENT AND CHILD IN RELATIONSHIP

The parent-child relation is a structural variable in the sense that children are always and without exception younger than their biological parents. Furthermore, children are dependent creations, unable to survive outside of affectionate relationship with an adult caregiver—the parent-child relation.¹⁶¹

Barth does of course recognize the universality of our birth as dependent children.¹⁶² He also recognizes that the relation is ordered by the superordination-subordination principle: "Children are directed to assume a very definite attitude of subordination in relation to their parents."¹⁶³ Moreover, "from the standpoint of children," he says, "parents have a Godward aspect,

¹⁵⁹ Neidhardt, p. 65.

¹⁶⁰ For Barth himself says, "When we think we know the particularity of human nature, how can we help trying to find it reflected on the level of human phenomena? It is inevitable that this attempt should be made again and again. And it may well be that its results will be significant and even instructive for us." *CD* III/2, p. 79.

¹⁶¹ See Rene Spitz, *The First Year of Life* (New York: International Universities Press, 1965); John Bowlby, *Attachment* 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1982); John Bowlby, *Separation Anxiety and Anger* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); M.H. Klaus and J.H. Kennell, *Parent-Infant Bonding* (St. Louis: C.V. Mosby, 1982).

¹⁶² Barth, *CD* III/4, p. 240.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

and are for them God's primary and natural representatives."¹⁶⁴ Still, he does not develop his understanding of the parent-child relation as a structural necessity.

To correct this deficiency, we would augment Barth's analogical program with the assertion that the structure of the human child-parent relation corresponds to "the human for God" relation as revealed in Jesus Christ's divinity. That is, Jesus Christ in his incarnation is related to God the Father, as the human child is related to the human adult caregiver or parent. In effect, the assertion means that two structural variables, age and gender, operate to order human relational existence, not just gender as Barth's understanding would suggest.

Barth, as we have seen, did not miss the age variable in his reading of the biblical text. Rather, he discounted it as a structural variable. By reading Genesis 1:28 in light of Barth's exegesis of Genesis 1:27, the assertion that the parent-child relation reflects divine *ad extra* relational existence is seen to be biblically supportable. It is also intrinsically compatible with Barth's analogical understanding of human creation in the image of God, male and female. In other words, if Genesis 1:27 means that we are created in the image of God, male and female, and if as male and female we reflect inner-Trinitarian relational existence, then verse 1:28 ("And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply,' . . .") means that the parent-child relation reflects outer-divine relational existence. Humans, who are male and female, enter into *ad extra* covenantal relational existence with their own genus by bearing children. In other words, children are created in the image and likeness of their parents.

When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth (Gen. 5:3).

Thus children are created in and for covenantal relationship with their parents, just as humankind is created in and for covenantal relationship with the divine. Significantly and in accord with this interpretation, the curse given to the woman after the fall reflects analogical disturbance in the divine-human relation.

To the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you (Gen. 3:16).

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 245.

By augmenting Barth's exegesis of Genesis 1:27 with an exegesis of Genesis 1:28, we are asserting that Jesus Christ in being both "the human for God" and "God for the human" reveals the analogic relation:

Jesus Christ (the Son) relates to God (the Father) *as* the human child relates to the human parent;

and its corollary:

God the Father relates to God's children (human beings) *as* the human parent relates to the human child.

With respect to the order of relational existence as revealed in Jesus Christ, we are instructed by the Apostle Paul who writes,

Christ Jesus, who . . . was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:5-8).

Note to begin with that it can be inferred from these verses that Jesus Christ *is* equal to God. Moreover, because there is "freedom in God but no caprice," the fact that he "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" cannot be contrary to his inner-Trinitarian relational nature. It must be a reflection of it. In other words, Jesus Christ in inner-Trinitarian relational existence serves the Father. Moreover, since God the Father in response to Jesus Christ's self-emptying obedience "highly exalted Jesus and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father . . ." (Phil. 2:9-11), we see that Trinitarian relations are characterized by mutual self-giving service. The Son serves the Father. The Father serves the Son. Thus, the *analogia relationis* compares and contrasts relations wherein the "I" exists in relational service to the "Thou," and the "Thou" exists in relational service to the "I."

James Youniss and others argue that children's peer relationships are formed for the purposes of companionship, affection, and common amusement.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, children relate to adults out of a need for protection, care, and instruction. Thus,

¹⁶⁵ James Youniss, *Parents and Peers in Social Development: A Sullivan-Piaget Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 168-187.

The parent-child interaction is based on . . . an indirect kind of reciprocity in which the child exchanges obedience for the parent's help and care. In this relation, the parent's authority is submitted to without choice or question. In contrast, the peer relation during childhood is based upon *direct* reciprocity. Peer interaction is on an equal footing, and children work toward finding mutually acceptable solutions in instances where they disagree.¹⁶⁶

Knowledge and respect for the rules of social order are developed in interaction with one's parents, whereas concern for equality, fairness, and mutuality is learned in interaction with one's peers. In light of this, we would assert that inner-Trinitarian relations are more directly analogous to male-female relations within a generation (adult to adult or child to child) than to the parent-child relation. With this assertion, a solution to the problem of the superordinate-subordinate ordering of male-female relational existence begins to emerge. For as the Son is distinct from the Father but still God, the adult male and the adult female are distinct and different but still equal, because they are of the same generation within the human genus of being. Combining this implication with the assertion that human creation in the image of God is creation in and for self-giving relational service, it follows that adult male-female relations are characterized by mutual self-giving service, not by a structural nonreciprocal superordinate-subordinate order, as Barth contends.

Alexander J. McKelway comes to a similar conclusion regarding the necessity of seeing adult male-female relations as reciprocal.¹⁶⁷ There is a difference, however, between McKelway's argument and the one presented here. McKelway affirms the analogical relation that Barth draws between inner-Trinitarian and male-female relations. He then affirms the superordinate-subordinate ordering principle, but does so keeping pretty much intact the methodological problem which is, so I argue, inherent in Barth's analogical understanding—the problem that compelled Barth to maintain his ordering principle in spite of the “dangers.” McKelway maintains his approach of interpreting Barth “according to his best parts.” Our critique, on the other hand, aims at a constructive resolution to the inherent methodological problem. It does so by taking account of the superordinate-subordinate nature of divine-human relational existence in the assertion that the structure of the divine-human relation is more analogically congruent with the parent-child relation than with the man-woman relation.

In other words, in the divine-human relation, God chooses to enter into

¹⁶⁶ William Damon, *Social and Personality Development* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), p. 269.

¹⁶⁷ McKelway, p. 232.

covenantal *ad extra* relational existence with a being different from God's Self: a being from a different genus, a being whom God created, a being who remains dependent upon God for continued existence. Similarly, in the parent-child relationship, parents enter into covenantal *ad extra* relational existence with a being different from themselves: a being who is a child and not an adult, a being whom they create, a being who remains dependent upon them for continued existence, a being of another generation. Thus there is similarity in difference—an *analogia relationis*. Just as God serves and protects the human, a parent serves and protects a child to ensure the child's continued existence and growth into maturity. Just as humankind must have its self-destructive actions negated by God, the human child must be told "No" by a parent when he or she is doing something dangerous or self-destructive. Just as humankind is necessarily subordinate to God, the child is necessarily subordinate to his/her parents. Just as God fully expresses God's nature in the creation of humankind, so the human parent fulfills his/her psychosexual destiny by conceiving and nurturing children.

That this critique and reformulation of the *analogia relationis* is true to the intent of Barth's methodological program is contended on the grounds of his established dialectical relation between servant and Lord in his doctrine of reconciliation.

He [Jesus Christ] is the Lord as he is first the servant of God and all others. The two things cannot be separated or reversed. It is not the case that he rules and at the same time serves, or serves and at the same time rules. *It is as he serves that he rules.*¹⁶⁸

We also note that for Barth the superiority of the parent in relation to the child is understood in terms of self-giving service. "The superiority which entitles [parents] to . . . respect from their children really consists in their mission, not in any quality inherent in them, . . ." Moreover, "the superiority which demands this respect consists . . . in the correspondence of their parenthood to the being and action of God."¹⁶⁹

THE ORDERING OF MUTUAL SERVICE

In light of the fact that Barth's ordering of male-female relational existence is scripturally based, we must see whether it is possible to reinterpret these same scriptural texts in support of the contention that the order of male-

¹⁶⁸ Barth, *CD* IV/2, p. 690; italic mine.

¹⁶⁹ Idem., *CD* III/4, p. 245.

female relational existence is "mutual self-giving service." Specifically, we will re-exegete 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 and Ephesians 5:21–33.

We turn first to 1 Corinthians 11:2–6.

In 1 Corinthians 11:2–6, Paul is addressing a problem that had emerged in the Corinthian church regarding proper worship attire. It seems that some of the women of the congregation were prophesying and praying with their heads uncovered. Paul's judgment on the matter is that the woman should "have authority on her head" (1 Cor. 11:10).

Paul begins the development of his argument in verses 2 to 9 by paralleling three relationships:

The head of every man is Christ.
The head of the woman is the man.
The head of Christ is God.

Here the Apostle simply declares the existence of these three relationships without explaining their nature. The man has a "head." The woman has a "head." Christ has a "head." Thus, the relationship between man and woman is analogous to the relationship between God and Christ on the basis of similarities and differences in relations with their "heads."

Paul continues his argument in verses 4 to 6 by making parallel statements concerning men's and women's active participation in worship.

Every man who prays and prophesies with his head <i>covered</i> dishonors his head.	Every woman who prays and prophesies with her head <i>uncovered</i> dishonors her head.
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In these verses, Paul plays with the meaning of "head." When he says that a head is to be covered or shorn, he is referring literally to the head of a man or a woman. But when he speaks of the head being dishonored, he is using the term metaphorically. That is, the man, when he prays with his head literally covered, dishonors his head, who is Christ. Likewise, when the woman prays with her head literally uncovered, she dishonors her head, who is the man.

In verse 7, Paul constructs a third set of parallel statements as an explanation for the foregoing.

The man is the image and glory of God.
The woman is the glory of man.

As M.D. Hooker writes,

Paul's concern here is to point to the contrast in glory . . . it is on this contrast that the different regulations regarding head-coverings are based.¹⁷⁰

Thus, the man's head is not to be covered in worship, because it reflects the glory of God. The woman's head ought to be covered, because uncovered her head reflects the glory of man not the glory of God. Both men and women were praying and prophesying in the church in Corinth. Paul tells the congregation that since man is the reflection of God's glory, any concealing of that reflection in worship, where God is to be expressly glorified (especially when a man is speaking to or from God in prayer or prophecy) would be shameful.¹⁷¹ Women, on the other hand, should cover their heads in worship, so as to hide the glory of man. Paul's argument for this is as follows: The woman is the glory of man. Her uncovered head reflects the glory of man, both because she is the glory of man and because the man is her head. In light of this, "her head must be covered, not because she is in the presence of man, but because she is in the presence of God and his angels—and in their presence the glory of man must be hidden. If she were to pray or prophesy with uncovered head, she would not be glorifying God, but reflecting the glory of man, and in God's presence this must inevitably turn to shame. The glory of man must therefore be covered, lest dishonor is brought upon the woman's 'head.'" ¹⁷² Moreover,

Since the words "glory" and "worship" are to some extent synonymous, to be the glory of God is in itself to worship him. According to Paul, however, it is man, and not woman, who is the glory of God, and who will therefore naturally play the active role in worship: if now woman also, in contrast to Jewish custom, takes part in prayer and prophecy, this is because a new power has been given to her. In Jewish thought the "glory" given to Adam was closely connected with his creation in the "image of God" and with his authority over the rest of creation: although Genesis 1:27f. speaks of this authority being given to both male and female, Jewish exegesis did not in fact allow it to Eve, and with this view Paul is clearly in agreement. Yet now woman, too, speaks to God in prayer and declares his word in prophecy: to do this she needs authority and power from God. The head-covering which symbolizes the effacement of man's glory in the presence of God serves as the sign of the "exousia" which is given to the woman; with the glory of man hidden she, too, may reflect the glory of God.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ M.D. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of I Cor. xi:10" *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963): 411.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 414.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 415.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 415–416.

Thus the head covering is not a symbol of the woman's subjection to man; rather, it is a symbol of the authority by which she may pray and prophecy in public worship. In other words, Paul has given new meaning to the differences in dress common to the first century. The woman, in wearing a head covering, now has "authority on her head" (verse 10), not its opposite, subordination.

We turn now to consider Ephesians 5:21-33.

According to McKelway, Barth's discussion of Ephesians 5:21-33 misses several opportunities to offer some dialectical easing of the superordination and subordinate ordering principle.¹⁷⁴ For instance, the call in verse 21 for *mutual* subjection ("Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.") should prohibit any absolutizing of the admonition in verse 22: "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord." But Barth reads the passage in exactly this fashion. Barth translates *hupotassesthai* as "keeping one's place," seeing in it only the obligation of man and woman to keep the order of initiation and leadership as established originally in Genesis 2. Barth understands Paul's exhortation for mutual subordination to apply only toward "the Lord," not toward the "one another" in a way that would "cancel the concrete subordination of woman to man which is the whole point of the text."¹⁷⁵

In opposition to Barth, the verse can be read as a call for mutual subjection "one to another" out of reverence for the Lord. As Markus Barth notes,

The single imperative of verse 21 ("subordinate yourselves to one another") anticipates all that Paul is about to say not only to wives, children, and slaves, but also to husbands, fathers, and masters, about the specific respect they owe because of Christ to those with whom they live together either by choice, or by birth, or by historical circumstances.¹⁷⁶

In other words, the subordination of wives to their husbands is an example of the same "mutual subordination which is also shown by the husband's love, the children's obedience, the parents' responsibility for their offspring, the slaves' and masters' attitude toward one another."¹⁷⁷ Read in this way, the exhortation in verse 21 is to mutual self-giving service.

Another place where McKelway sees Barth missing an opportunity to recognize the dialectical nature of the husband's superordination and the wife's subordination is in verse 25: "Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the

¹⁷⁴ McKelway, pp. 237-238.

¹⁷⁵ Barth, *CD* III, 4, p. 174.

¹⁷⁶ Markus Barth, *Ephesians: The Anchor Bible*, 34 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1974), p. 609.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Church and gave himself up for her.”¹⁷⁸ In III/4, Barth interprets the connection between the husband and Christ to mean only that the husband’s superordination is to take place under grace and in love. It is as if he is reading the verse to say, “Husbands love your wives, *because* Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her.”

Markus Barth, reading the same passage, interprets the husband’s responsibility to his wife in a more mutually dialectical fashion when he writes:

Paul not only asks the husband (1) to subordinate himself to his wife as she is to do to him (5:21), (2) to exert his responsibility as the “head” only after the fashion of the Messiah who laid down his life as a servant of those he loved (5:23, 25b), and (3) to heed the full meaning of Gen. 2:24 (“... the two will become one flesh”). Much more the sum and refrain of his special exhortation to the husbands is this: “Love your wives” (vs. 25a); “the husbands owe it [to God and man] to love their wives” (vs. 28); “each one of you must love his wife” (vs. 33). In short, the apostle tells the husbands in three statements to “love” her, love “her,” “love her.”¹⁷⁹

This love remains covenantal.¹⁸⁰

Thus, Markus Barth’s interpretation of the Ephesians passage is congruent with our understanding of the ordering principle for perichoretic–covenantal relational existence as “mutual self-giving love.” The analogy drawn in the passage is covenantal, the husband is related to the wife, as Christ is related to the church, and the relation is mutual. Thus what Ephesians 5:21–33 teaches is that in Christ self-giving service (subjection) is double, not single sided.

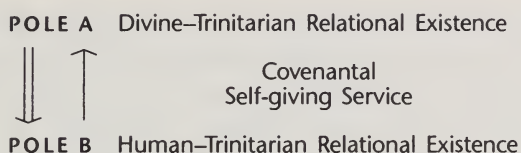
IMPLICATIONS OF CRITIQUE FOR BARTH’S THEOLOGY

In terms of the differential integrative relationship analogy with which we have been working, our reformulation of the *analogia relationis* reads as follows: Pole A is divine–Trinitarian relational existence (Father, Son, Holy Spirit); pole B is human–Trinitarian existence (male, female, child); and the dynamic unitary structure that binds the two together is the structure of mutual self-giving covenantal relational existence made known and effective in Jesus Christ. In other words, in Jesus Christ two asymmetric covenantal differential integrative relationship analogies (divine–human and parent–child) and two symmetric perichoretic differential integrative relationship analogies (inner–Trinitarian and male–female) become one integrated unitary structure.

¹⁷⁸ McKelway, pp. 237–238.

¹⁷⁹ Markus Barth, *Ephesians*, p. 701.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 702.



With our rereading of Barth's analogical program, the reciprocal nature of male-female relational existence is maintained, as is an ordering principle. The difference is that as reconceived, the ordering principle is one of *mutual* self-giving service, not one of an irreversible subordinate-superordinate nature. Moreover, because men and women are not here hierarchically related at the level of their being, they offer different, but equal forms of relational service. Only when the differentiation of the I from the Thou is, itself, structurally hierarchical (as in the parent-child and divine-human relation) does the ordering principle reflect the inequality of super- and subordination.

In other words, since God is of a higher order of being than humankind (humankind being existentially dependent upon God and not vice versa), God serves humankind in a way that is superordinate to the way humankind serves God. Still, the serving is reciprocal. Similarly, children are existentially dependent upon their parents. Parents, however, are not existentially dependent upon children. As a consequence, they serve children in a way that is superordinate to the way children serve them, but still they both serve.

Correlatively, men are not existentially dependent upon the women of their same generation, and women are not existentially dependent upon the men. Thus the order of mutual self-giving service in adult male-female relations is not of a superordinate-subordinate nature, because by differentiation of the analogatum into two parts (male-female and parent-child), the relation between adult partners, male and female, no longer needs to bear the analogical weight of functioning as principle analogatum for relations between both equal and unequal partners—the weight that creates difficulties and apparent contradictions in Barth's discussion of gender—the weight that makes it necessary for Barth to go to great lengths to assert the equality of male and female despite the ordering principle.

Barth had to maintain the principle of superordinate-subordinate ordering because he was comparing male-female relations to both divine-human covenantal relations and divine-divine perichoretic relations. This being the case, the superordinate-subordinate order of the male-female relation was not an inconsequential matter. The derivative and dependent nature of the human in relation to the divine could not be ignored. In other words, given Barth's understanding of the *analogia fidei* and his view of the infinite qualitative distinction between the divine and the human, he had to account for divine

initiation of covenantal relational existence in the *analogia relationis*. In our reformulation of the analogy, the superordination of God in relation to the human is accounted for by the assertion that the parent-child relation (not the male-female relation) is the most adequate analogatum for divine-human (*ad extra*) relational existence, whereas the male-female relation is the most adequate analogatum for divine-divine (*ad intra*) relational existence.

Another objection that our differentiation of the *analogia relationis* counters is the argument that Barth is comparing a binary relation (male-female) to a trinary relation (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Our proposal effectively eliminates this objection, because in our analogies the relations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are compared and contrasted to the relations of female (mother), male (father), and child. In other words, trinary relations are compared to trinary relations. Moreover, since children do grow up to become human adults and Jesus Christ does ascend to the Father, the equality of the three members within the analogatum and the analogue is preserved. On the other hand, since no matter how old we become, our parents are always of an older generation, there is in the parent-child relation a structural analogatum for the infinite qualitative distinction between God and humanity.

In this critique and reformulation we have continued to affirm with Barth that true human understanding of relational existence is revealed and actualized only in Jesus Christ. We have, on the other hand, moved beyond Barth (but in accord with his method) in placing this revealed understanding in dialogue with the human sciences.

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